

PRESS RELEASE

August 1, 2006

RE: FORMER LOCAL 91 OFFICIALS PLEAD GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT

United States Attorney Terrance P. Flynn announced that former Local 91 officials Mark Congi, Paul Bellreng, Albert Celeste, and Joel Cicero pled guilty before Chief Judge Richard J. Arcara today. Congi, Bellreng and Celeste pled guilty to racketeering conspiracy, 18 U.S. C. 1962(d). Cicero pled guilty to extortion, 18 U.S.C. 1951(a).

United States Attorney Flynn said the maximum penalty faced by each defendant is a twenty year imprisonment, and a fine of \$250,000, except for Congi who faces a fine of \$800,000 due to the alternative fine provisions of 18 U.S.C. 1963(a).

Mr. Flynn said the United States Attorneys Office filed federal racketeering and extortion charges against a total of 16 members of Laborers Local 91 in 2001. These defendants were accused of committing a variety of acts of violence against non-union and union members who belonged to different trade associations.

Gordon S. Heddell, Inspector General, Department of Labor, stated:

"Corrupt union officials engaging in violence, extortion and intimidation hurt workers and hinder business development. Today's pleas demonstrate our resolve in combating

labor racketeering and related violence. My office remains firmly committed to working tirelessly with other law enforcement agencies and the U.S. Attorney to this end."

Today's guilty pleas were the result of a culmination of a long term investigation on the part of the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Gordon S. Heddell, Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Laurie Bennett, Special Agent in Charge of the Buffalo Division, the Niagara County Sheriff, under the direction of Thomas Beilein, the Niagara Falls Police Department, under the direction of Superintendent John Chella, and the New York State Police, under the direction of Major Michael Manning.

Chief Judge Arcara will impose sentence on Cicero on November 17, 2006, Congi on November 20, 2006, Celeste on November 21, 2006, and Bellreng on November 22, 2006.